

- Knowing that you are thrashing around about our foreign language needs, I am sending the attached to you. It was done by me in my former guise -- I now have to act on it.

- The general recommendations are on page 5, para 9. Detailed options for executing same are in para. 10 and following paras.

- The simple message is that, one way or another, NFAC is going to put more effort and resources into foreign language training.

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Approved For Release 2004/05/12 : CIA-RDP83-00156R001000060062-3

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DD/A Registry
File *Training*

19 December 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, NFAC

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FROM

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SUBJECT

: NFAC and Foreign Language Competence--
Policy and Program

1. In response to your direction last September, and I have reviewed the condition of NFAC's foreign language program. We agree that:

Competence in foreign languages is an integral part of an intelligence analysis and production capability. Competence in a language relevant to one's assignment is a condition of professional excellence.

This memorandum discusses present policies, practices and conditions and then (paragraph 9 and following) sets forth a series of recommendations and alternative ways of acting on those recommendations. We suggest that you make this memorandum a matter for discussion at a meeting with the Office Directors. I am considering these recommendations as closely related to additional recommendations I shall soon be making about NFAC career development.

2. There is no statement of, or common understanding about, NFAC policy concerning foreign languages. The CIA-published statement that pertains reads: "The CIA Language Incentive Program is intended to encourage achievement of skills in selected foreign languages," and goes on to list the procedures to accomplish that intention and to limit the scope of that program. Participation in this Language Incentive Program is voluntary. The incentive for an NFAC person could be a single increment of about seven to fifteen percent of one year's income (for a junior analyst) in return for achieving a certain level of competence in one of 19 languages in that year. More single increments can be won in subsequent years by achieving higher levels of competence in that language or levels

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of competence in others of the 19 languages. Over a four-year period (1975-78), 82 NFAC persons have participated (of which 59 were OER employees). These 82 persons worked on 9 of the 19 incentive languages. Seventy-two of the 82 persons were concentrated among 5 languages (Russian-41, Chinese-9, Spanish-8, French-7, and German-7). In 1978, 30 NFAC persons have participated and have been awarded a total of \$10,200.*

3. NFAC's main components (Offices and Groups) individually determine their needs and standards for foreign language capabilities. The formal system for doing so (NFAC Unit Language Requirements) calls for each component to list its requirements for specific language-qualified persons in given occupational categories. It also calls for a listing of the number of such persons on hand and occupying those categories. For 1977, 3 NFAC offices--OCR, OER and ORPA--submitted lists of requirements and the status of their satisfaction. The other NFAC offices did not submit any requirements. These three offices showed a requirement for 135 persons to be competent in a total of 18 foreign languages. They showed a total of 66 persons on hand with a tested competence in 7 of the 18 languages. Another way of looking at it is that the 3 offices reported they had competence in less than half of the languages they need, and they could show (tested competence for) less than half of the number of language-qualified persons they need. About the same time as the foregoing 1977 requirements and satisfaction report, a thorough study showed that 25 percent ☐ of all NFAC analysts ☐ were competent in reading foreign languages relevant to their assignments. The number of languages counted was 17, and 89 percent ☐ of the competent analysts ☐ were concentrated among five of those languages (Russian, French, Spanish, Chinese and German). This study and its conclusions are attached as Annex 1.

4. Our recent Professional Inventory reflected that there are at least 249 economics and political affairs analysts who concentrate on single countries or geographic groups of countries.** In addition, there are large numbers ☐ of military, scientific and technical, geographic, resources, biographic, photointerpretation and other analysts who indicated for the Inventory that they concentrate upon a

*For comparison, the other directorates recorded the following participants, 1975-78: DDO-516, DDS&T-245, and DDA-58. In 1978 the total number of Agency persons receiving awards was 115; the total amount was \$61,450.

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single country or a geographic group of countries. As you know, more than half of all such analysts focus on the USSR and China. But, those among the remainder signaled primary responsibilities for about 60 single countries among which there are about 35 different foreign languages. For other data on language competence in NFAC reflected by the Professional Skills Inventory, see the attached report, Annex 2.

5. These various facts and figures indicate that NFAC components have chosen to gain competence in a select and small number of foreign languages through offering a reward to volunteers who qualify for the Incentive Program and who pass the required test. (Those who engage in language training do so on a part-time schedule, a slow, difficult, and less productive way compared to full-time training). Competence in any one of about one-half of the world's languages is unrewarded and not particularly encouraged. Language requirements of individual components are not reviewed in their relationships to each other or to the projected needs of NFAC. Attitudes toward the value and use of foreign languages among NFAC components and their managers vary widely, as do their policies, practices and procedures concerning foreign languages. These differences derive in part from substantive differences in the purposes and work of these components. In other parts, however, differences reflect individual perceptions of the worth of foreign language capabilities--in the specific as well as the general--and personal uncertainties about or inattention to the subject.

6. The following arguments are made for and against NFAC development and sustaining competence in all the world's languages in temporary usage.

a. Pro: Familiarity with the culture and conditions of a foreign country is important to understanding its people, institutions and government, and such familiarity can be gained through newspapers, magazines, and books published in that country's language.

Con: Reading competence is no assurance that a person will read those newspapers, magazines, and books from which such familiarity can be gained. (Like saying that sexual intercourse does not assure pregnancy.)

b. Pro: Understanding the possible uses of individual words can be important to understanding the meaning and purpose of the speaker or writer--in politics, economics, science, industry, and military affairs. An analyst with

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knowledge of the language being used as well as the subject matter can make an independent judgment about the meanings of the words and their nuances.

Con: We should depend upon expert linguists to interpret meanings of foreign words, not be dependent upon less than expert interpretations. Also, it takes a long time to learn a language well enough to appreciate the nuances.

c. Pro: Improvement of foreign language skills among analysts would be a time-saver for analysts and collectors alike. The NFAC analyst who can do some initial screening himself can make more intelligent use of the expertise of [] documents officers and professional translators. Everybody gains.

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Con: It hardly pays to invest resources in prolonged language training for an analyst, only to transfer him to another area or function.

d. Pro: Analysts who travel to or receive residential assignments in the countries of their professional interest will gain much more from the experience if they know the relevant language.

Con: An expensive aid to travel, to buying the groceries, and to making friends at the local disco.

7. Objective and statistical evidence by which to judge the worth to the organization of foreign language competence is not available. We do know from our Professional Inventory that nearly 500 out of 900 respondents to one question indicated that they perceived some degree of professional advantage in having a foreign language skill. Four-hundred and sixty-eight persons out of 1316 responding to another question gave the opinion that their effectiveness would be or would have been improved by greater emphasis on foreign language training.

8. Cogent reasons why NFAC intelligence analysts need foreign language skills are given in the attached report (Annex 3) from a knowledgeable and responsible group of Agency officers. This report was written in answer to the question: "Do [] people think that NFAC analysts should have competence in foreign languages?"

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9. We have concluded that selected NFAC analysts and researchers in all NFAC components must have at least reading competence in all languages that are relevant to the responsibility of any given component, if NFAC is to develop further its capability for excellence. We recommend the following measures:

a. Enlarge and make more specific NFAC's requirements for language competence related to components, kinds of positions, assignments and languages. (See paragraph 10 for specifics.)

b. Develop new incentives which reciprocate the requirements and give vitality to the process. (See paragraph 11.)

c. Change over to full-time language training for achieving initial competence.

d. Establish a point of responsibility in NFAC--a "dean of languages"--as your delegated authority, representative and advocate for language programs. (See paragraph 12.)

e. Begin now to program supporting resource expenditures relative to the FY81 budget and beyond. Also, identify the extent to which we can use NFAC and Agency FY79 and FY80 resources to begin to achieve some of these changes.

We offer in the following paragraphs some detailed proposals and alternatives.

10. Enlarge and make more specific the NFAC language requirement.
We need to accomplish one of these alternatives:

a. Require that each analyst employed at NFAC be competent in reading one foreign language. New professional employees would be required to pass the reading test to qualify for permanent employment. NFAC professional employees (including supervisors) who wish to be considered for assignment in a foreign country must prove reading and speaking competence in the language of the country or they will not be considered for such assignment. If there are no candidates for such an assignment, one will be selected and will be given the necessary reading and speaking training in the relevant language before being sent on the assignment.

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b. *Alternatively, each NFAC analyst position in which the analyst is responsible for a particular foreign country (or a particular group of countries) will be identified as a position requiring reading competence in a relevant language. Assignment to such a position will be contingent upon proving reading competence within one year before or one year after the appointment.** Advancement in such a position will be contingent upon achieving and sustaining tested reading competence. Other analyst positions, such as in technical, scientific and military analysis components which focus mainly on one or a few countries, will be reviewed, and a minimum number of the senior grade positions in each component (at branch or division level) will be identified as requiring reading competence in relevant languages. Reading and speaking competence in a relevant language is a requirement for an NFAC assignment to a foreign country. Analysts not in assignments requiring language competence are encouraged to achieve reading competence in one foreign language and will be rewarded for doing so.

c. As Senior Intelligence Analyst positions are established at GS-15 and supergrades, relevant foreign language competence will be one requirement to be met by candidates for certain of those positions. This requirement is complementary to either of the foregoing alternatives.

11. Develop new and reciprocal incentives.*** The following are alternative ways of providing new incentives reciprocal to the above requirements:

*We favor this alternative.

**Longer post-assignment periods should be allowed for especially difficult languages.

***With these proposals, we assume that the Agency's Language Incentive Program will continue.

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a. *Establish premium pay at two or more levels for reading competence in a foreign language. In a two-level premium pay system, an individual claiming competence would be tested regularly (every second or third year?) and would be awarded a regular, continuing salary increment. If the individual is assigned to a position which is identified as requiring the language competence he possesses, then he will receive a greater premium--say thirty dollars per paycheck. If that particular language competence is not needed in his assignment, then he will receive a lesser premium--say ten dollars per paycheck.

b. Another way of providing incentives would be to require reading competence in a foreign language as a condition for being promoted to GS-12 (or, GS-11?). To qualify for promotion to GS-13 (or, GS-12?), an individual must prove reading competence in a language relevant to his assignment.

c. Another way would be to award a Quality Step Increase to each person who achieves reading competence in a foreign language.

d. Combinations of the foregoing alternatives for incentives could be used.

12. Dean of Languages. Such a point of responsibility is important to achieving and sustaining progress in our language capabilities.

a. You should assign the responsibility as an additional duty to one of your line managers--an Office Director or Deputy Office Director. The person you select should be in sympathy with the policy and should know that he will be held responsible for and rated on his performance as your Dean of Languages.

b. A supplementary alternative would be to appoint language monitors (additional to regular duties) for each language. These monitors (for example, the Japanese Language Monitor) would assist the components in identifying positions requiring reading competence in a given

*We favor this alternative.

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language, would counsel individuals striving to achieve and sustain competence in a given language and would assess the quality of training provided for a given language. The dean would interact directly with the NFAC Career Development Officer, the Office of Training and other directorates in pursuing satisfaction of the needs of NFAC and NFAC persons for language competence.

13. Any efforts we undertake concerning foreign languages need to be related in concept and action to other NFAC personnel and job enhancement efforts such as the development of specialist career cadres and the program for foreign residential assignments. We are doing so, and it is apparent at this stage that useful, reinforcing linkages can and will be established among these efforts and interests. Also, as we act to apply any of these alternatives that are approved, adjustments must be made in the way they are applied to present personnel to avoid unfairness.

14. Organizational and program connections exist between NFAC's foreign language efforts and the Office of Training and the Operations Directorate. Attached is a copy (Annex 4) of an explicitly informative and meaningful memo from Tom Polgar to his Director--the Deputy Director for Operations--on foreign language needs. It looks like DO and NFAC needs are great and are coinciding. We shall share information and planning with DO as well as with OTR. We should support Tom Polgar's 18 recommendations, and adopt those of the 18 which are applicable to NFAC.

15. Can we afford such programs? The obvious response is: Can we afford the cost of not making these efforts? In any case, the dollar cost to NFAC of an aggressive language training program seems to be reasonable. If we assume that 250 NFAC analysts have achieved reading competence in a language relevant to their assignment and are each receiving premium pay of \$30 per paycheck, the annual cost increment would be \$195,000. If we assume that another 500 analysts have achieved reading competence in languages not relevant to their current assignment and are each receiving a premium of \$10 per paycheck, that would cost another \$130,000 for a grand total of \$325,000 annually. This amount is less than [] of NFAC's annual payroll. In addition, however, we must take into account the total costs to NFAC, OTR and the Agency of providing language training in many languages to a continuing flow of NFAC full-time students. The OTR Language School is now capable of training twice the number of students who received instruction in 1978 if class size were increased and class scheduling regularized. In response to my

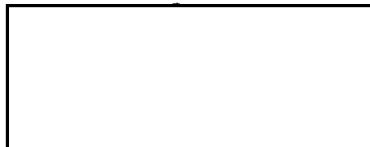
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question about incremental costs to OTR, Harry Fitzwater pointed out the following. If we assume that OTR had to hire new GS-09 instructors to conduct full-time training for 30 NFAC employees--three classes in Russian and one class each in Arabic, Dutch, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Swedish and Turkish--the add-on cost would be about \$125,000 and the accompanying allocation of personnel positions.

16. In sum, an aggressive program to strengthen the language capabilities of NFAC persons would cost something less than \$500,000 a year in the initial years. At that or a lesser level of expenditure, we should be able to sustain a continuing program including new language learning as well as maintenance of language capabilities. In return, we shall gain:

- More knowledgeable analysts throughout NFAC and particularly in political and economic work where knowledge of peoples, countries, cultures and governments is so important.
- More analysts who can bring their independent opinions to bear on "raw" intelligence from various kinds of sources when the foreign language is involved, meaning is in question and the linguists are uncertain.
- More analysts who can give knowledgeable guidance and requirements to other organizations providing foreign language translations and analyses.
- Analysts who can gain more from travel, residence or liaison work in those foreign lands relevant to their work.
- An intelligence analysis capability which is complete in the eyes of those we serve, who should have confidence in our individual and group capabilities.



Attachments - As stated